

## Voices Against Violence Offers Many Thanks

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On Saturday morning, Sept. 23, Voices Against Violence, the rape crisis and domestic violence agency serving 13 communities throughout the MetroWest region, held its 6th annual Purple Passion 5K Run/4K Walk to Break the Silence. The event began at the Bishop Street headquarters of the South Middlesex Opportunity Council (SMOC) with about 100 participants of all ages completing the course around downtown Framingham, guided by a number of Framingham Auxiliary Police Officers who once again generously volunteered their time for our cause.

More than \$22,000 was raised for the program from a variety of sources, including online donations, race registrations and pledges. That money will be used to ensure that our 24-hour emergency hotline is operational 24/7, 365 days a year; our staff will be available to safety plan with survivors, accompany them to court, deal with the emergencies that inevitably occur, provide emergency housing and counseling to survivors and their children and we will continue our important educational outreach programs to schools and organizations throughout Metrowest.

I would like to thank Congresswoman Katherine Clark for once again serving as our Honorary Chair and the Congresswoman's District Counsel, Wade Blackman, a member of our event planning team, for his inspirational words of encouragement prior to the start of the race. Thank you to Framingham Police Chief Ken Ferguson, who has been a longtime supporter of our program, State Representative Chris Walsh, who served as our official race starter, State Rep. Carolyn Dykema, Framingham Town Clerk Valerie Mulvey, and Framingham Selectwoman Cheryl Tully Stoll.

I would like to give special thanks to our media sponsor, Metrowest Daily News, for their help in publicizing our annual fundraiser, along with Goodwin Graphics of Cohasset for the beautiful purple tee-shirts they designed for staff and event participants. And a special thanks to our parent organization SMOC and Executive Director Jim Cuddy, for continuing to believe in our mission and always lending support to Voices Against Violence in countless ways.

We are so grateful to the many event sponsors who helped us exceed our fundraising goal of \$20,000. And finally, we could not organize and execute this event without the wonderful Voices Against Violence volunteers. They are amazing women and men who care deeply for this community. It was so gratifying to see so many of you working alongside your children to ensure a safe, successful and welcoming event for all.

Our planning committee is already starting on the 2018 5K Run/4K Walk to Break the Silence, which we expect will be biggest and best yet. In the meantime, donations to Voices Against Violence are always appreciated: please visit [www.smoc.org](http://www.smoc.org) and click on the Services tab to find the Voices Against Violence page. Under the Services subsection you will see a 'click and pledge' link where you can make a safe and secure gift to support our ongoing work.

**Patricia Hohl**

Director, Voices Against Violence